



HR0984

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives are saddened to learn of the death of former
4 Illinois Wesleyan University President Robert Eckley, who
5 passed away on April 15, 2012; and

6 WHEREAS, In his 18 years overseeing the University, his
7 contributions were unparalleled, and he is remembered as a man
8 who changed Illinois Wesleyan for the better; and

9 WHEREAS, He was born in Kankakee and had a passion for
10 learning; he graduated from Peoria High School in 1939, and
11 continued on to study economics at Bradley University, earning
12 a master's degree in business administration from the
13 University of Minnesota, and a master's degree and doctorate in
14 economics at Harvard University; and

15 WHEREAS, He served in the United States Coast Guard
16 Reserve, and was an assistant engineer aboard the USS Davenport
17 from 1943 to 1946; and

18 WHEREAS, He taught students at Harvard and the University
19 of Kansas, and was an industrial economist with the Federal
20 Reserve Bank of Kansas City, Missouri; and

1 WHEREAS, More than 11,000 students received degrees during
2 his years as president; to improve students' quality of life,
3 he encouraged the formation of new student groups like the
4 Black Student Association in 1969; his long-cherished dream to
5 launch a campus radio station was also realized in 1972, when
6 WESN-FM went on the air; and

7 WHEREAS, In addition to his presidential legacy at IWU, he
8 also had an esteemed reputation as an economist, and authored 5
9 books; his articles appeared in publications like the Harvard
10 Business Review, the American Economic Review, the Brookings
11 Review, the Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society,
12 and the Journal of the Abraham Lincoln Association; and

13 WHEREAS, He was director of State Farm Insurance Companies
14 for 27 years, as well as a board member of Turbodyne
15 Corporation of Minneapolis, McLean County Bank, and Central
16 Illinois Public Service Company; and

17 WHEREAS, He served as president of the Bradley United
18 Christian Foundation, first vice president of the Illinois
19 Council of Churches, a trustee of the Methodist Medical Center
20 of Illinois, and a member of the Peoria Mayor's Commission on
21 Human Relations; he was an emeritus member of the IWU Board of
22 Trustees; and he was a member of the American Economic
23 Association, the National Association of Business Economists,

1 and the American Statistical Association; and

2 WHEREAS, He was preceded in death by his brother, Carson;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, Robert Eckley is survived by his wife of 65 years,
5 Nell B. (Mann) Eckley; his children and grandchildren, Paul N.
6 and Penny and their daughter, Tessa; Robert George and Mary
7 Anderson and their son, Will; Jane Lennon and David Gartshore;
8 and Rebecca and Ken Melchert and their children, Adriane, John,
9 and Alex; therefore, be it

10 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
11 NINETY-SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
12 we mourn, along with his family, friends, and former students,
13 the passing of Robert Eckley; and be it further

14 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
15 presented to family of Robert Eckley as a symbol of our sincere
16 sympathy.